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*** A PIONEER WOMAN OF ILLINOIS.**

By JULIA ANN BUCK.

On a beautiful fall day, over a hundred years ago, in a small log cabin in Kentucky, a little girl was born, and this girl was destined to become one of the foremost pioneer women of the time.

Nancy Green Stice was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, September 23, 1807, during Thomas Jefferson's administration. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Stice who were married during the stirring times of the formative period of our constitutional government. They were the parents of thirteen children.

Nancy Stice had the good fortune to be born into a family of noted ancestors. They were among the leaders in the fight for freedom of the thirteen colonies.

Her grandfather, Andrew Stice, was a German immigrant who came to North Carolina in an early day before the Revolutionary War. Thirteen children were also given to these grandparents.

Her maternal grandfather Wilson and wife came from Scotland before the Revolutionary war and settled, in what is now Kentucky. He, an earnest patriot, was captain in the Revolutionary war, and in the battle of Bunker Hill, he had the misfortune to be wounded in the right knee which made him a cripple for life.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were also the parents of thirteen children. Nancy Stice's parents and both grandparents, by a remarkable coincidence, gave thirteen children to our country's pioneer struggles for national life.

Tragic and stirring events entered into the lives of this pioneer family. Thomas Wilson, the eldest son, was killed by

* This essay received the first or State prize, a gold medal, in the contest in the schools of Illinois from the eighth to the twelfth grades inclusive, on the subject, Pioneer Women of Illinois. The contest was conducted by the Illinois State Historical Society and the Illinois Society Daughters of the American Revolution. The winner of the prize is a sophomore in the high school of Monmouth, Warren County, Ill.



JULIA ANN BUCK.

Indians before the Revolutionary war. A brother, James Wilson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was also a noted jurist; he was appointed by President Washington as Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. This distinguished man died in North Carolina in 1798.

Little Nancy spent a very happy, but busy childhood in her southern home. In those days children were taught when very young, the lessons of home and home-making. Among these were weaving, sewing, cooking, and many things about which modern children know nothing. Her parents soon learned that Nancy was the most industrious, as well as gayest of their children.

But the "March of Empire" was in their blood and when Nancy was nine, her parents decided to leave Kentucky and come to Illinois, a then far western wilderness. This seemed an unequal exchange for the happy life of her Kentucky home.

Even as a child, Nancy had high ambitions, for as she was leaving Kentucky, she told her old grandmother that, "she hoped to live as long and useful a life as she". Her grandmother died at the age of 105 and was very proud of the fact that she had walked one and a half miles when she was ninety-six years of age. Even at that age, she wove fine linen handkerchiefs and caps, and was an expert at the spinning wheel.

The trip to Illinois was made on horse-back with all their earthly possessions in a big wagon. They arrived in October, 1816. Illinois was then only a territory and not until two years later was it admitted into the Union. There were no railroads at that time, but soon after they arrived, the first railroad in Illinois was built.

Madison County, in Southern Illinois, was their destination and here Nancy Stice grew to womanhood. Two years after coming from Kentucky, while nearly all of the thirteen children were still young, their father died.

When Nancy was twenty, she married a young farmer, Andrew Terry. They lived a happy life in their log-hut for nine years, and then the young husband died on June 28, 1836, and left his young wife with three children. She soon left Madison County and came to Greenbush, Warren County, where she was destined to spend the remainder of her days.

She lived with her brother-in-law, James Simmons, and the two families numbered sixteen persons. All lived in a log cabin 16x16. Yet they frequently kept strangers over night, sometimes as many as eight or ten at once. Upon such occasions, the table and all loose furniture was moved out of doors, and as they had four large beds in the room and a trundle bed under each, they scattered over the floor and piled up for the night.

They finally built a larger cabin 18x24 and then they were rich indeed! All the surplus money which they had acquired was banked in a sugar trough and stowed away up in the garret.

In 1844, a tall, handsome major fell in love with Nancy and married her. Major John C. Bond, a veteran of the Black Hawk war, was a wealthy farmer and one of the best-known residents in this section of the state. Each had three children and two were born to them. They lived in a log cabin a short distance from Greenbush and years later built a residence, then considered palatial.

The Indians, at this time, frequently camped about Greenbush, often as many as five hundred at one time. These were generally friendly, but great thieves. However, earlier in Madison county, they were a constant menace to the settlers. Once, when most of the men were away, two apparently friendly Indians named "Big Kill Buck" and "Little Kill Buck" came to the settlement, and massacred all of twenty families excepting an old man and a crippled boy. At this time, one woman, carrying a baby, had walked twenty miles to see her father and finding the Indians had just been there, turned and walked back home that night. This made a distance of forty miles in twenty-four hours.

Several of Nancy's relatives were killed by the savages. One uncle's family were all killed but the uncle who happened to be away from home.

Aunt Nancy Bond, as she was called, won the confidence and was loved and honored by everybody; all, when they had troubles, came to Aunt Nancy, and were comforted. If anyone died, Aunt Nancy was called, always; and if the dead person happened to be a mother of young children, it generally fell to her lot to care for them. In this way, at some time in



NANCY G. BOND

her life, she took care of forty children beside her own eight. She cared for, clothed, and fed them, doing the work and clothing them from the raw material. Today, what would we think of cooking, weaving, spinning, carding, sewing, and candle dipping for forty-eight children?

Aunt Nancy was the one to go when anyone was sick or in trouble. One winter night, a man was very badly hurt and Aunt Nancy was asked to come. The night was very bitter and the snow was deep. Her husband objected, but plucky Aunt Nancy insisted and these two, together with a neighbor and wife, set out. They had to wade waist deep in the snow, but finally reached the place and gave aid.

Although Nancy Bond's life was full of hard work, she had a few social times. A time that was looked forward to was the quilting bee. Then, all the families for miles around came to a neighbor's house where they were making quilts, and helped. The women brought much food, and elaborate preparations were made for the big feast after the quilts were made.

After thirty-eight years of married life, Major Bond died on May 20, 1882. Two years later, this pioneer wife and mother had the misfortune to become blind. Although no longer able to go about and do deeds of mercy, she was loved by all and everyone still came to her for advice. She was still so active that one scarcely noticed that she was blind. She spent a great deal of time knitting and nothing delighted her more than to have her old friends call on her, and talk over old times. Whenever visitors, friends or stranger, came to her daughter's home, in which she now lived, if they paid the least attention to her, she would make them a present of a pair of mittens.

When she was well in her nineties, she could easily have been taken for sixty years of age, for her face was remarkably full and round and her voice, unusually strong. She always wore a black and white checked dress with a black silk apron over it, and she did not consider herself dressed unless she had her little black lace cap on. She had a remarkable memory and she could give the dates of the birth, death, and marriage of each of her children, fourteen grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren, and five great-great-grandchildren.

Nancy Stice Bond was one of the most prominent Daughters of the American Revolution in this part of the state. She was an honorary vice-regent of the Puritan and Cavalier Chapter of Monmouth. During the last few years of her life, it was the custom of the chapter to observe Flag Day at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Cordelia Bond Staat. She always took a great deal of pleasure in these meetings. The annual celebration of her birthday was also the occasion of much interest to her.

Grandmother Bond, as she had become, was the head of five living generations, four of which were charter members of the Puritan and Cavalier Chapter. At that time, it was believed this was without a parallel in the country, as no one under eighteen years of age can join the Daughters of the American Revolution. Beside Mrs. Bond these are: Mrs. Cordelia Bond Staat, Mrs. Edwina Bond Randall and Mrs. Nora K. Rayburn.

She died May 14, 1906, after a long life of honor and usefulness. Only part of her girlish ambition, "to live as long and useful a life as her old grandmother" was realized. She did not attain the hundred year mark, lacking a year, but she certainly realized the ambition "to live a useful life."

She was buried in the Bond cemetery adjoining her farm, where six generations were already buried. The Bond cemetery has a very interesting history. Many years before Nancy Bond's time, a stranger, who was passing the old Bond homestead, was suddenly taken ill and fell in front of the house. Jesse Bond, the occupant of the house, took him in, but he died. Jesse Bond went to a neighbor on whose farm was a grave-yard and asked to bury the man there. But his wife objected, for she said they would be "haunted" with the ghost of the stranger; so Mr. Bond returned home and buried the man on his own land, as he said he had no fear of being haunted. Afterward, he deeded this land for a burial place for his neighbors and his family. This cemetery is now one of the best cared-for private cemeteries in the country.

Nancy Stice Bond came to Illinois when the state was still a territory and she witnessed the growth of Illinois until it now stands as one of the foremost states of the nation. The



HOUSE OF NANCY BOND. WARREN COUNTY.

settlement of Warren County was only a few straggling cabins and she watched it grow to the large population and the thickly settled districts it now contains.

When she was born, Thomas Jefferson was President of the United States. All the vast territory west of the Mississippi, known as the Louisiana Purchase, had recently been obtained and was practically a great wilderness. All that immense region known as the Mexican cession, which includes the states and territories from the northern boundary line of California and Nevada southward to Mexico, was for many years afterwards owned and controlled by foreigners, as was also the Oregon country on the northwest. It seems almost impossible, that during the span of one short life, so many mighty changes could take place.

It is not strange that after such a long, useful and honored life, I should be proud to write this sketch about "A Pioneer Woman of Illinois", my great-grandmother, Nancy Stice Bond. It is, in turn, my ambition to live as "useful a life as she".

The material for this sketch was secured from obituaries and from numerous newspaper clippings. These clippings were the results of interviews with her at various periods of her life.